

# Students' well-being in the Netherlands

## Looking into social dimensions of well-being

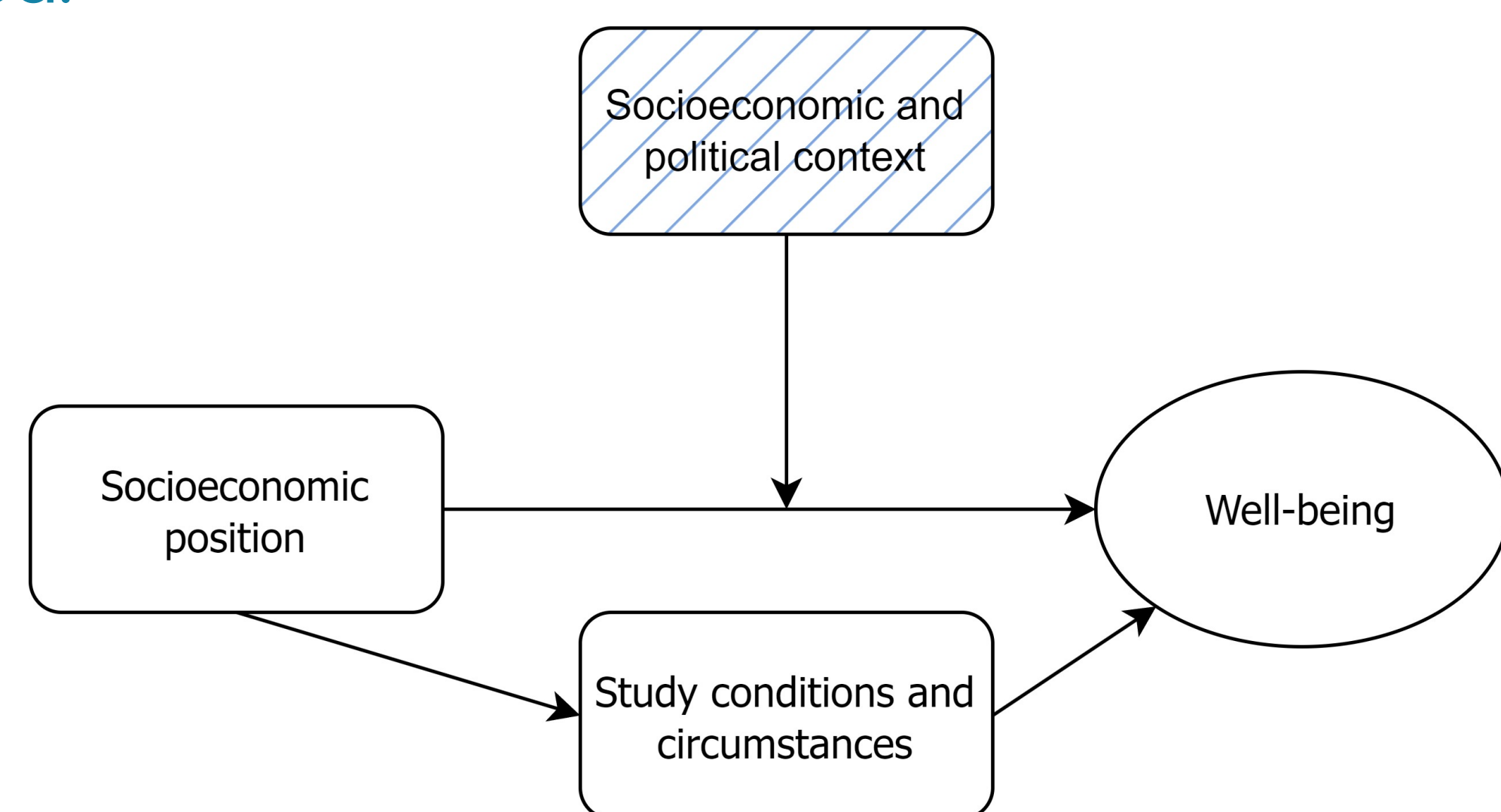
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### Introduction

There have been **alarming reports on students' well-being** (e.g. RIVM, 2021), implying negative trends of student's well-being, at least partly exacerbated due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and measures to tackle COVID-19. Using the **Dutch Eurostudent 8 data**, collected in 2022, we will **investigate students' well-being and contributing factors**. Eurostudent 8 is a **European project**, aiming to **collect comparable data on the social dimension of European higher education**. With data on Dutch students, we will relate **students' well-being** with other factors, amongst others **experiencing financial difficulties, students' resources and study conditions** and **parental resources**. At a later stage, this data will be merged with over 20 other national Eurostudent 8 micro data sets to look at differences between and within countries. This data will also be made available as a Scientific Use File (SUF).

### Framework

Adaptation of Commission on Social Determinants of Health (CSDH) conceptual framework (WHO, 2010). For now, the focus is on the socioeconomic position of students and well-being; in a later stage the role of socioeconomic and political context will be investigated.



### Data and methodology

As part of the European project Eurostudent 8, data for the Netherlands was collected in June 2022. This led to over 8.600 students who filled in the survey. In the survey topics such as demographics, social and economic indicators as well as well-being and mental health were covered.

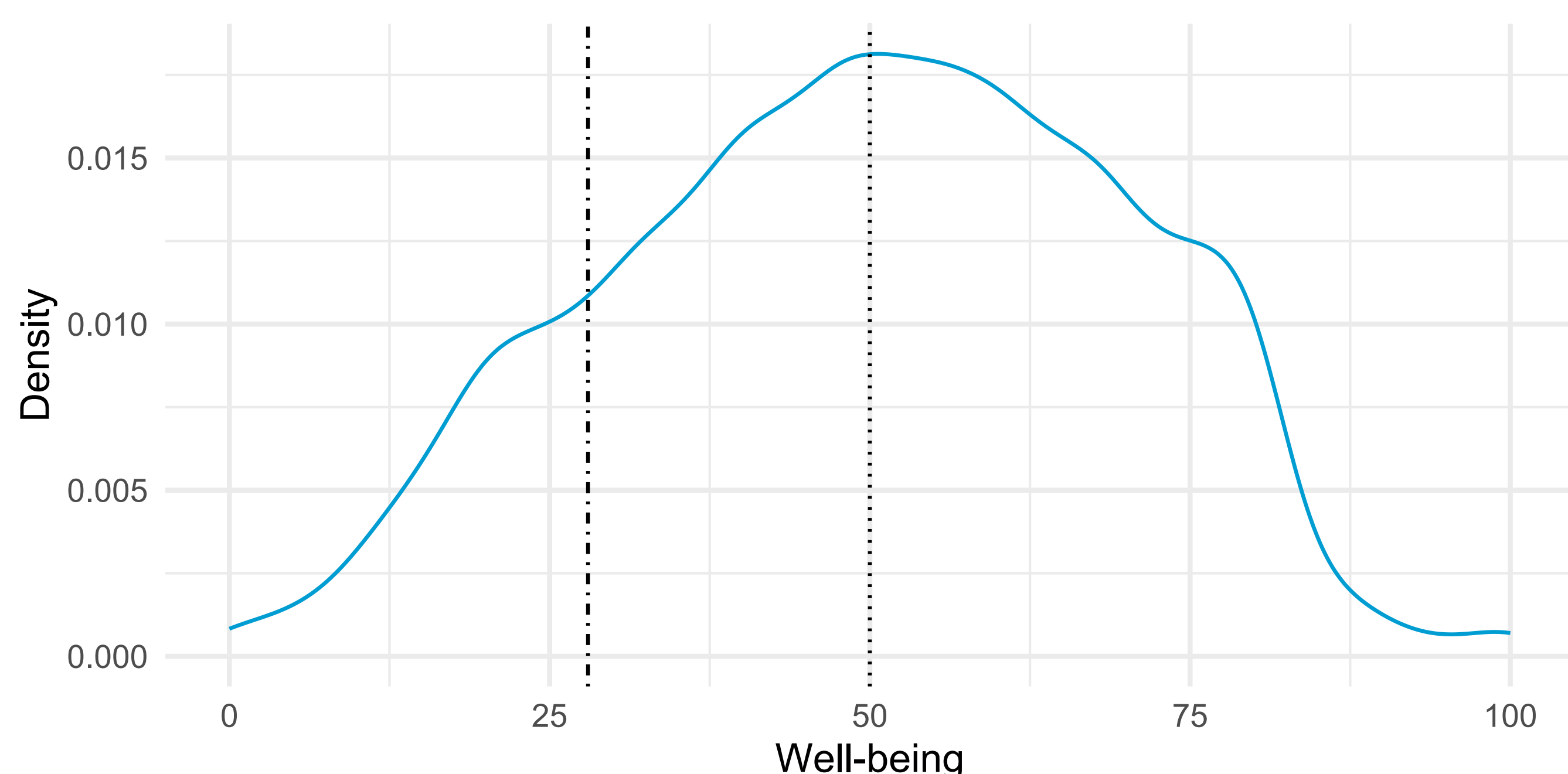
**Well-being:** The WHO-5 well-being index was used:  
Over the past 2 weeks ... [6 point scale: all the time – at no time]

- I have felt cheerful and in good spirit
- I have felt calm and relaxed
- I have felt active and vigorous
- I woke up feeling fresh and rested
- My daily life has been filled with things that interest me

Mean: 50,1 (s.d. 19,87), Cronbach's alfa: 0,864

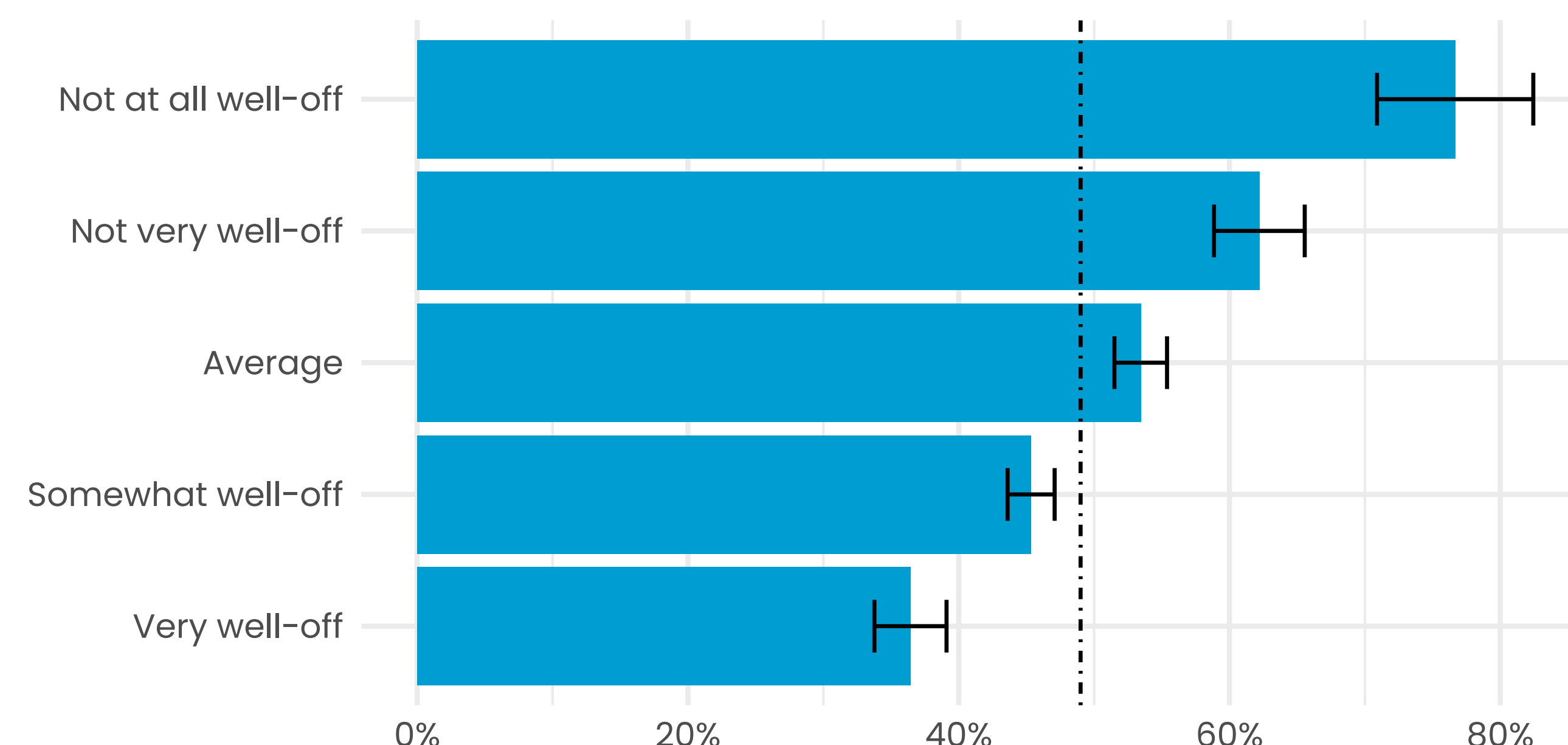
% <= 50 (poor well-being): 49%

% <= 28 (very poor well-being): 18%



### Results

Bivariate analysis: Percentage of students who indicate a poor well-being, differentiated by **how financially well-off their parents** are compared to other families. There are **clear differences**, with the percentage ranging between **36%** and **77%**.



Multivariate multilevel logistic regression analysis on having poor well-being (score lower than 50). Controlled for: age, field of study, degree type. Students nested in institutions; selection made on full-time students (n = 7.819 / 36).

	Model 1		Model 2	
	Exp(b)	s.e.	Exp(b)	s.e.
Intercept	0,89	0,10	<b>0,66***</b>	0,10
Parents no higher education	(ref.)		(ref.)	
Parents higher education	0,95	0,06	0,95	0,06
Parents (very) well-off	<b>0,70***</b>	0,05	<b>0,78***</b>	0,06
Parents finance average	(ref.)		(ref.)	
Parents not (at all) well-off	<b>1,56***</b>	0,08	<b>1,40***</b>	0,09
Student: No migration/international background	(ref.)		(ref.)	
Student: Migration background	<b>1,26**</b>	0,09	<b>1,27**</b>	0,09
Student: International student	<b>1,21**</b>	0,07	<b>1,20**</b>	0,07
Gender: Male	(ref.)		(ref.)	
Gender: Female	<b>1,27***</b>	0,05	<b>1,27***</b>	0,05
Financial difficulties: Severe			<b>2,38***</b>	0,06
Financial difficulties: Average			<b>1,45***</b>	0,06
Financial difficulties: No			(ref.)	

*Additional mediation analysis: Effect of SES on well-being is partially mediated by students' financial difficulties.  
ICC: 0,004. R<sup>2</sup>: 0,045/0,075*

### Conclusion

A substantial part of the Dutch student population show a poor (49%) and very poor sense of well-being (18%).

There is clear **social inequality in well-being**: students from **lower SES families** show significant higher chances of having lesser sense of well-being. This is partly related to students' own financial difficulties. In addition, **female students, students with a migration background** and **international students** all have higher chances of having a **lesser sense of well-being**.

### Future

Additional analysis will be performed on the newly constructed **Eurostudent 8 SUF** (to be published in July 2024). Eurostudent 8 data of over 20 countries will then be harmonized, merged and made available as a **Scientific Use File**. In this analysis we will additionally focus on differences between countries.

